

## WE CAN HELP

Many children are born with or may develop disabilities which challenge their normal growth and development, impacting their success in school. Fortunately, many of these conditions can be helped if parents recognize the problem early and seek help.

If you suspect your child may have special needs, call one of the numbers below. Don't hesitate to call their attention to, and/or seek advice about particular behaviors or possible difficulties your child may be experiencing. Remember, the earlier you recognize your child's special needs and seek help, the greater the possibility that your child can be helped. First Steps and your local school district need to know about all children with challenges, ages birth through 21 in order to plan for their individual needs.

For additional information and assistance, contact:

### FIRST STEPS

Cabinet for Health and Family Services  
Division of Adult and Child Health  
275 East Main Street  
Frankfort, KY 40601  
(502) 564-2154

### Kentucky Department of Education

Ages 3-21  
502-564-4970  
Office of Teaching &  
Learning/Division of Learning Services  
300 Sower Blvd.  
Frankfort, Ky 40601

Printed with state funds

The Kentucky Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services. Alternate formats of this publication are available upon request.

April 2004

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

FROM

# DO YOU KNOW A CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS?



Kentucky Department of Education

The following early warning signals are some of the more common indications that a need may exist. If for any reason you suspect that your child may have special needs, we urge you to seek help immediately. Don't wait until your child enters school before you begin to deal with that concern.

## HEARING

- Does not turn to face the source of strange sounds or voices by six months of age.
- Has chronic earaches or running ears.
- Talks in an unusually loud voice.
- Turns the same ear toward a sound he/she wishes to hear.

## THINKING

- Does not react to his/her own name when called by age nine months.
- Is unable to identify hair, eyes, ears, nose and mouth by pointing to them by age two.
- Does not understand simple stories told or read by age three.
- Does not give reasonable answers to such questions as “What do you do when you are

sleepy?” or “What do you do when you are hungry?” by age four.

- Does not seem to understand the meaning of the words “today,” “tomorrow,” or “yesterday,” by age five.
- Cannot find the words to describe their thoughts clearly at any age.

## SEEING

- Is unable to reach for and hold a toy by age six months.
- Is often unable to locate and pick up small objects which have been dropped.
- Frequently rubs eyes or complains that eyes hurt.
- Has reddened, watering eyes or encrusted eyelids.
- Holds head in a strained or awkward position (tilts head to either side—thrusts head forward or backward) when trying to look at a particular person or object.
- Sometimes or always crosses one or both eyes.
- Often complains of blurred vision and headaches.



## TALKING

- Cannot say “Mama” or “Dada” by age nine months.
- Cannot say the names of a few toys and people by age two.
- Cannot repeat common rhymes or TV jingles by age three.
- Is not talking in short sentences by age four.
- Is not understood by people outside the family by age five.
- Cannot pronounce words clearly; speech is slurred and awkward at any age.

## MOVING

- Is unable to sit up by age nine months.
- Cannot walk without help by age two.
- Does not walk up and down steps by age three.
- Is unable to balance on one foot for a short time by age four.
- Cannot throw a ball overhead and catch a large ball bounced to him/her by age five.
- A noticeable change in coordination; is unable to start or stop movement.

## SOCIALIZING

- Does not play games such as waving bye-bye, peek-a-boo, and patty cake by age nine months.
- Does not imitate parents doing routine household chores by age two.
- Does not enjoy playing alone with toys, pots and pans, sand, etc. by age three.
- Does not play group games such as hide-and-seek, tag-ball, etc. by age three.
- Does not share and take turns by age five.
- Appears to have experienced a change in personality or mood.